The
COMMONWEAL

VOLUME XLVII *November 7, 1947* NUMBER 4

THE WEEK 83
THE GENERALS AT THE CIO *Francis Downing* 86
FRANCE FOREVER *Anne Fremantle* 88
THE LITTLE MAN WHO RAN NEW YORK *George N. Shuster* 90
COMMUNICATIONS 92
THE STAGE *Kappo Phelan* 94
THE SCREEN *Philip T. Hartung* 95
THE LABOR MOVEMENT *John C. Cort* 96
M. V. A. *James Rorty* 97
MORE BOOKS OF THE WEEK 98
Therese—The Heretics—When the Mountain Fell—The Passion Left Behind—Adversary in the House—Postscript to Yesterday

THE COMMONWEAL *is indexed in the Reader's Guide, Catholic Periodical Index and Catholic Bookman. Founded by the Calvert Associates, Inc., in 1924 with Michael Williams as President and Editor.*
Published weekly and copyrighted 1947 in the U.S.A. by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. MUrray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second class matter February 9, 1934, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. U.S. and Canada $6 a year, Foreign $7. Single copies 15c

EDWARD S. SKILLIN, *Editor*
PHILIP BURNHAM, *Executive Editor*
C. G. PAULDING, *Managing Editor*
Associate Editors
John C. Cort, Anne Fremantle, Gregory Smith
Kappo Phelan, *Theater* Philip T. Hartung, *Cinema*
Corresponding Editor
Harry Lorin Binsse
Advertising Manager
John Brubaker

Special Session

ONE of the most hopeful elements in the President's decision to reconvene Congress this month is the report that the findings of visiting members of various House and Senate committees had finally persuaded him of the emergency in Europe. For in the debates soon to ensue in House and Senate the testimony of members who were first-hand witnesses can be counted on. The papers have unhappily been playing up—à la man bites dog—the remarks of returned Congressmen such as Representative Taber of New York, who encountered no "convincing evidence" of need for stop-gap aid in France and Italy. It is heartening, then, that a material number of the scores of committeemen who went to see for themselves can be relied on to speed the necessary appropriations.

Despite expected opposition, the real question about stop-gap aid to France, Italy, Austria and American occupation zones in Europe and the Far East is one of date. It was no doubt for psychological-political reasons that Mr. Truman cited the domestic crisis occasioned by high prices ahead of the emergency overseas in his press conference and his message recalling Congress. There is not even a specific indication that stop-gap aid will take precedence over the long-range Marshall Plan, although patently it should come first on the agenda. The immediate drive should therefore be both to make this emergency appropriation the first order of business and to set up a procedure for seeing it through with despatch.

But in spite of the jockeying over procedure on this item and of whatever disputes arise over fixing the appropriate amount, the real contest will be over the Marshall Plan itself. As the special session merges into the next regular session of Congress, with perhaps a brief Christmas recess, all sorts of competing questions will be thrust into the legislative hopper. Some of them such as a revised Stratton Bill, permitting admission into this country a limited number of Displaced Persons each of the next four years, have an essential rôle in the rehabilitation of Europe. The question of commodity prices itself is in this category. Others such as rent control (which runs out at the end of February), a national housing act, reduction of taxes and federal aid to education are home matters. And there is the continuing pressure to enact universal peacetime military training. Even after all these months the Marshall Plan may find rocky going in Congress.

The principal opposition now seems to stem from certain American business interests. David Lawrence currently asserts that our leaders of private enterprise demand to be shown that American aid actually enables European economies to operate on their own power. Accordingly many of them are unwilling to support appropriations for more than a year ahead. On the other hand some are fearful of building up European businesses too much—afraid that this will cut too deeply into Latin American markets for U. S. products. Moreover in the agricultural areas of the Middle and Far West there is considerable opposition to allocating tractors and other farm implements to European nations when such agricultural machinery could be used for domestic rehabilitation. And all this opposition comes forward at an awkward moment for delay.

Who is to talk to these skeptical business men and the Congressmen who represent them, in terms of good business? There is so much to call to their attention. It is worth venturing something to start Europe operating again, for she constitutes the best market for American goods. It is worth several billions to restrain Russian Communism, preventing the withdrawal of Europe from the Western economic sphere of operations and the transformation of all the Continent into an entity hostile to the United States. Maybe some of the returned Congressmen can turn about for a change and tell their constituents how much they were impressed by the self-imposed austerities in England, the industriousness of Italy and other indications that the sums requested will be put to fruitful use. Somebody has to tell these constituents that this is not a situation which can be decided on a short-term business basis. Their whole future is in the balance.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The de Gaulle Statement

"AN IMMENSE force has arisen. The Reunion of the French People . . . has gathered to itself . . . many more votes than all the other parties put together." That is de Gaulle speaking on October 27 and, because the figures on which this sweeping confidence is based are not yet available, it is difficult to know what he means. It is true that he denies that the French Communist Party has any right to be thought of as a French party. French Communists are "separatists," they are "only the delegates of a foreign dictatorship," and they have lost "at least one seventh of their voters." There remain, then, some four million "delegates" or "separatists" but de Gaulle says they are not a political party and can be disregarded.

"The groups that are parties, properly speaking, see their downfall accelerated," de Gaulle adds, and so that is that, there is no one left but de Gaulle and his RFP, and therefore the constitution, which the French made for themselves after the liberation, is no good any more because it was made to handle the existence of many parties and there are not any parties any more, and the Ramadier government operating under this "absurd" constitution has no longer any right to govern. "The national assembly must be dissolved as soon as possible" and then the French people will elect de Gaulle. Should anyone oppose this plan he will be incurring "literally crushing responsibilities," a remark that sounds like a threat, and this one does too—it is the closing paragraph of the statement: "In any case, the Reunion of the French People is pursuing its national task. Open to all those who wish to play only the game of France, it will expand and organize to assure, whatever happens, the salvation of the nation."

All by itself—without allying itself with any other parties (they represent nothing), without appearing to consider it necessary or advisable that any other parties exist.

Perhaps the French can be convinced that a new institution will solve their misfortunes. Vichy, in its day—its sad day—was a new institution which also got rid of the "multiplicity of parties," and perhaps one cannot judge the Vichy institution because it worked under the Germans and in defeat. But the French people turned against it when they could. And now something is proposed that sounds like a proud Vichy which would be coherent and strong. It would put the "separatists" out of business; it would control the relationship between capital and labor (under some new Charter which of course would take care of strikes) and it would be open to socialists, and even to the Popular Republicans, if they behaved.

Perhaps a majority of the French people might vote such an institution into existence; should they do so they will find a minority—a large minority—irreductibly in opposition.

Gain and Loss

AMERICAN industry as now organized can develop in two directions. One road bordered with increasing rigidity of worker and employer organizations, heavier government regulation and sharper caste consciousness leads directly toward the Marxist goal of class warfare and taking over by the State. The other, which is more difficult to define, leads to increasing management-employee identification and partnership, to the worker's realization that in a very actual sense a company is his own—that he has a real share in management and profits. In view of preference for the latter, two recent news items indicate gain and loss. The first is the formation at Cleveland of a national Council of Profit Sharing Industries with 16 charter members committed to the objective of selling the idea of equitable sharing of profits with employees to American business in all sections of the country. The other is the discontinuance of thirteen years of employee profit-sharing by General Electric on the grounds that the company's original plan had, under union pressure, been so broadened to include all employees that it had proved unsatisfactory as a production incentive.

The Hollywood Affliction

THE PATHETIC thing about "Hollywood" doesn't rise from the afflictions the movie industry generally cries about—and what a cry baby business the movies have lately been! It's hard for an outsider to weep over Hollywood even now while it's being hounded by this strange Congressional Investigation. After all, as sympathetic friends are saying, they might be investigating the movies!

A Congressional investigation is a difficult device. Congress ought obviously know something about what goes on in the part of the world it makes laws for. Communism—directly or indirectly . . . acting and reacted to—is certainly a pertinent point in many of the government's proper, present concerns.

The constitutional question seems at times over-bruskly solved by Chairman Thomas of the Un-American Activities Committee, and by some witnesses and the amiable Robert Kenny. The kibitzers tend to leap without much looking too. The Bill of Rights is highly fundamental, and so also are the clauses of the Constitution setting up and activating the federal legislature.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Eric Johnston, in his marvelously two-geared formal statement, said: "I wanted to see Communists exposed. I still do. . . . An exposed Communist is an unarmed Communist. Expose them, but . . . in the traditional American manner."

There is no accepted traditional American manner for performing this function. The question of communism as a serious issue isn't old enough for genuine traditions. Up to date, the principal public approach to the problem has been to make a complete, chaotic mess which dirties up the issue past the point where you can see through it clearly enough to claim wisdom confidently for any so-far stated policy.

Obviously, a certain number of Congressmen and publicists and propagandists exploit the Red issue demagogically for ends other than the public welfare. Just as certainly, communists and their kin exploit the terms and concepts of "red baiting," "smearing," "witch hunting" and the rest in order to shelter and nurture what can be called in summary, atheistic communism and its devotees. A fine choice, but I would pick the institution of Congress with its accidental demagogs shouting "Red" to the institution of the Communist Party with its essential wrong leaders and its trailers crying "Red baiter."

To the extent it's possible, it would certainly be pleasant to avoid this wretched choice. Friends of ours—faithful Christians, good citizens, attractive personalities—are repeatedly injured in the way Mr. Johnston points out: through "tying a red tag on innocent people by indiscriminate labeling." It is seldom agreeable and frequently injurious. And friends also, and considerable groups of the population, are often made dupes and innocents, *de facto* giving aid and comfort to communism, by the counter-cry of "witch hunting." Finally, sincere and intelligent men, lacking, perhaps, the highest gift of tact, are frequently massacred by the broadside offensive-defensive tactics of the commies, detonating the "Red baiter" and "fascist" barrage.

Except for trying to be virtuous and trying to make everything wonderful and prosperous and free in general (like Johnston's solution), no one has yet developed a very likely program for dealing with communism. It would be disturbing if the first useful program turned out to be, as it were, personal.

The present investigation of Hollywood appears to be largely valueless. What are the terms of reference; what are Congress or anybody else expected to do about communism and the movies, whatever information is turned up or repressed?

To date, the importance of Hollywood to communism has hardly been the Marxian or Soviet propaganda planted in the films themselves. Much more important appears to have been the financial aid obtained directly and indirectly out of movie figures for Party and Party tied and sponsored purposes. The money and the prestige and encouragement. Then, the base in Hollywood serves the Party in its ordinary efforts to build up a position in the enormous and dynamic South California industrial region, where movies, one must remember, are not the biggest thing at all, and industrial workers are increasing in prodigious numbers. Los Angeles is larger than Hollywood.

It is a social, but it is also a personal problem. First of all, for the people in Hollywood—or rather, for people all around in artistic and quasi-intellectual jobs. Isn't it the same thing that has been analyzed almost to death as "the position of the American intellectual?" The artist or intellectual, one way or another, gets a job in, or for, one of the great mills (movie, publishing, advertising, what have you). He does not like the product which his work eventually results in—movie, magazine, broadcast jingle, etc. But he gets an awful lot of money. But the disapproved product embodies the prestige of the best technique, about the smartest brains, widespread public acceptance, close-up, if specious, economic utility. So. Generally he goes along. Often he, or she, settles upon a sense of moral irresponsibility toward his, or her, regular job, continuing to voice disapproval of the product. He often tends to compensation in investment of some of all that money and of all that talent in a cause that severely condemns the "system" which puts him in his position. It's an unattractive personal problem and gives rise to difficult (and often very unattractive) personality problems. Note the tension aids philanthropies and progressive movements, much as it does communism, depending on the character of the persons.

What law can Congress pass to save the artist from this? Who would dare write a preamble to such a law? One way or another each artist and writer out there in Los Angeles, and here and through the country, must make his own law governing the relations of his work to his conscience. That really seems prior to a political and legislative job.

The Hollywood communism problem looks big in Washington and in the local newspapers because the glamor of Hollywood, the exploitable prestige of its names, and the carrying qualities of its ideas and customs and appetites are national and international creations. Nearly everybody in this country, at least, has given the good big opening which the movie industry exploits. Hollywood gets force by what we give it. Congress never passed a law saying good citizens had to give Hollywood the taste and morals and ideas which the movies, enthusiastically recompensed, decorate for our amusement. There is no law forcing us to be amused by what the Industry does give us—in character, quality, or political implication. PHILIP BURNHAM.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Generals at the CIO

Francis Downing

I HAVE seen and heard the two great generals of our time. Both of them have so deeply engaged our quick emotions that we have thought of them easily and naturally as worthy of the civil leadership of all Americans. In both cases our emotion is understandable and even justified. It is also proof that we have not come to any understanding of the burden of the presidency of the United States.

The White House is a home which we reserve for men who win our tribute. And with the end of wars, in exultation and sighing relaxation we think of the White House as a kind of distinguished home where the weary, winning soldier may find rest. That is one way of thinking about the White House, and that is the way we usually think when we give our votes to generals. It is an uncritical way, but it is easily understood in a moment of national joy. It is part of a mood, a festive mood of a people whose history is one of child-like faith, revering persons and not philosophies. The faith knows no fears; has suffered no touch of disenchantment. That generals can turn into tyrants does not trouble us, for we have had no Caesars, no Napoleons, no Boulangers, no Blum-entitled Charles de Gaulle.

General Eisenhower's appearance before the CIO Convention in 1946 had the advantage of this mood. His uniform and his medals proved that he came as a soldier. His career as a soldier would be analyzed and debated by historians; approved or condemned, blamed or praised. But, here, before the civilian soldiers of the assembly lines he was the greatest soldier of all time. For them he had won the war against fascism. But he had won it with their aid; it was they who constituted the "arsenal of democracy." Between them and General Eisenhower was an intimate relationship, a relationship that was born of need and depended on need. This was the first time in our history that such a relation was so formally recognized, so fully expressed.

Never was it so clear that the whole nation had been at war. Never had such a premium been put on production. Never had so many workers been so emotionally and economically caught up in war and victory. Never had the meaning of war been known to so many workers. Never had so many been so conscious of freedom. Rightly or wrongly workers thought of the war as a "people's war"; amid its other meanings, this was clear: the advancing tides of fascism menaced and destroyed free workers and free associations called trade unions. These ideas and beliefs were the background against which workers gave up—for "the duration"—the right to strike.

Now they had won. With all his laurels like a visible aura about his head, conscious of his victory and of theirs, General Eisenhower spoke to them. Beaming and graceful, full of charm, affluent of personality, it was clear, at once, that he who had depended on their production, he who, perhaps, had led their very sons, so won their respect, compelled their admiration and conscripted their allegiance that the "highest gift" of the American people could be his—be his, that is, if labor votes were controlling. For it was there, so far as I am concerned, that the Eisenhower boom began. The wireless of their minds whispered it, their hearts joyed in it, their applause, at once, proclaimed it and approved.

★

At the CIO Convention, in Boston, however, a different mood prevailed, and a different general came to give it voice. The mood was one of anxiety and the voice was that of George C. Marshall. It is true that Mr. Marshall was presented to the delegates by Philip Murray as "the great soldier whose wise counsel and leadership sustained General Eisenhower and millions of our fellow-citizens during their overthrow of fascism's European citadel." But it was equally true and much more pertinent that Mr. Murray spoke of him as "one of the world's greatest champions of peace."

For in the year between the visits of the two generals, the hold on peace had become less sure. Despair sucked at the very marrow of the cold and carnal bones of men. The winds that bellied out the flying flags of faith grew more faint. The UN seemed to be attenuating to acrimonious failure. The iron curtain which Mr. Churchill saw spread from Stettin to Trieste was raised and Stalin announced a new Comintern. It was conceivable that Stalin was thus replying to Mr. Marshall. Many men found it difficult to suspend their disbelief in another war.

For the decision of the United States to contain communism in Europe and the Marshall Plan itself were everywhere characterized by communists as imperialism. All this was part of what Walter Lippmann has called the cold war. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

labor movement was profoundly aware of these developments, and afraid of new possibilities. Its interest in our foreign relations was intense.

On the domestic scene the labor movement regarded government with a staring and suspicious eye. Government had broken the railroad strike with the menace of a worker draft. Government had broken the coal strike and the Supreme Court had blessed its fractious belligerence. Government had revived the injunction, christened it, as if water would make it clean, and set it like a jewel flaming inside the Taft-Hartley Law.

It was into this atmosphere that General Marshall came. Knowing eyes watched his entrance; and newsmen stood on chairs, turning away from Marshall, standing applauded on the stage, to see who refrained from overt approval. For there was no doubt that among the delegates there were those who had no part in inviting Marshall. They were polite because they did not dare to disobey the conventions. Their applause was tepid, disciplined and constrained. This was a procedure to which they could not assent, from which they could not becomingly abstain. They could not swallow the drink; they were forced to raise the glass, and it left an unsweet stain on their pinched lips. I did not envy them. Their political schizophrenia had put them where they were. And yet I found their curious conduct a sharp comment on our politenesses, our conventions, our own hypocrisies. Because it is always a difficult thing to hold one allegiance and to profess another for safety's sake. It is always a difficult thing to be expected to hold lit the tapers of worship in a temple you some day plan to burn down.

★

I have written that it was a different general who was at the CIO Convention in 1947. Actually it was not a general who addressed us at all. It was a solemn civilian who had put off his uniform. It was a civilian who had made it clear—as the first general had never done—that his visit might not touch off, or be used to touch off, a presidential nomination. That had been disposed of by George Marshall long ago. It had been disposed of firmly without coyness, clearly, without equivocation. The suitors had been sent away and would not return or be expected. That marriage had been refused, and there was none so foolish as to persist with flattery, with unction or with hopes. None spoke of it, for no one thought of it at all.

Yet it was not merely a civilian who stood before the photographers, smiling and with good temper and with what seemed like infinite patience. It was not merely a civilian who put on glasses before the microphones and stood waiting for order and for the hushed attention he must have known would be his.

For George Marshall was our Secretary of State. Unlike the speech of General Eisenhower, the words of Mr. Marshall were official. They could and did commit our government. They would be read by all the governments of the earth. Mr. Marshall was aware of this, and he apologized to us afterwards when he left the lectern. He told us that he had no wish to read a speech, but that he had to lest what he said be misconstrued.

Not only was Mr. Marshall our Secretary of State. He had come to Boston six months before; and his words had so modified the Truman Doctrine that we do not speak of it at all, but of the Marshall Plan. All this—the known though silent opposition in the convention hall, the crisis of the world, the answer of the Soviet Union in the rebirth of the Cominform, the elections in Italy, the savagery of words almost heard at Boston from Lake Success, the fact that the Canadian CIO unions (only two days before) had endorsed, in sharp rejection of the communist position, the Canadian Commonwealth Federation, that our CIO was to discuss its foreign policy after Mr. Marshall had left—all this filled the hall with a seriousness and a solemnity that were not present when General Eisenhower spoke.

And adding to the prestige and historic quality of this event was Mr. Marshall himself. This blond haired man who needs glasses only to read; this straight and lithe American carries in his eyes and in his bearing the grace and manners of a man who was used to obedience: obedience of self to himself; obedience of other men to him. I do not mean to suggest that about him was something feudal. I mean only that it was as if he were aware of his strength as a little girl is aware of her beauty and of her charm, taking it for granted as a gift, having no need for gratitude, and free, too, of vanity. Like the little girl, Mr. Marshall seemed to me a man who would know charity and how and wherein it differed from mere kindness. And that there was great warmth deep in this rich personality, a sense of friendliness, seemed to me true. I have ridden in a Pullman with Henry Wallace, and I got the impression that he preferred that all of us in the car recognize that he was Wallace and that he was, like Chaucer's lawyer, a busy and important man. Mr. Marshall, I felt, would have started a conversation.

Mr. Marshall's opening words made it swiftly apparent that he was not innocent of the tides and currents in our labor movement. "If labor can be confused or embittered," he said, "if labor can be made to lose faith in the community of which it forms a part, then the core of any national society is threatened. . . . I am personally confident of American labor's reaction to efforts

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

made to disrupt the structure of our society in the domestic field."

By our Secretary of State it was thought necessary to outline fundamental considerations important to an understanding of America's position in foreign affairs. The basic issue, as he saw it, is:

> Whether or not men are to be left free to organize their social, political, and economic existence in accordance with their desires, or whether they are to have their lives arranged and dictated for them by small groups of men who have arrogated to themselves this arbitrary power!

★

This, of course, has been the issue as long as men have discovered liberty and known tyranny and wished to be free of it. The presence in the world of nations offering security and freedom from conflict holds strong temptations to the minds and hopes of men. The presence in the labor movement and in this convention of men and women who give allegiance to a tyrannous state, in which the Marshall principle is both absent and denied, filled, as he must have known, his words with special meaning.

That he was aware of this became immediately clearer:

> No section of the American population has a more vital stake in the preservation of free institutions in the world than has American labor. For, among the first victims of any dictatorial régime, and notably of the police state, is the right of labor to organize itself for the protection of its interests.

There were those in the convention who were disturbed, as was I, by the new definition of the police state given by Mr. Truman. Many saw in the loyalty tests and their application in Mr. Marshall's own department cause for anxiety. And only a few of those made their synthetic thunder on the left. None in the convention viewed the Taft-Hartley Law as an increment to workers' freedom. They regarded the authors and proponents of the law as, at best, believers in easy solutions. For they would agree that if the issue as defined by our Secretary of State was correct, the attitude which formed it implied a perpetual tension in society, "a doubtful equilibrium," as young Arthur Schlesinger put it, in "The Age of Jackson," "constantly breeding strife and struggle." And that was an attitude denied even if understood at all, by those who worshipped what they dared to call "the worker's state." Sulking they silently sat, and rose silently and stood only when sigaled by their servile leaders.

And so, after the Secretary of State had explained the purpose and meaning of the so-called Marshall Plan (Mr. Murray said, "There is no Marshall Plan in existence"), a foreign policy resolution was introduced. The CIO favored universal disarmament. More pertinent to what the Marshall idea required, the CIO favored giving relief in food, clothing, medicine and other goods to the hungry people of war-torn countries, so long as these things, as Mr. Murray summed it up, "shall not be poured into those countries and given to those people for the purpose of oppressing them, that the people in the meantime will enjoy the exercise of their own franchise and make their own determination concerning their own type of government."

The resolution was very dear to Mr. Murray and he acknowledged a part in preparing it. He explained it at some length. And he interrupted a delegate from the American Communications Association who was talking about American "imperialism" to say: "I assume you also believe the heroes of Stalingrad are entitled to take the rostrum and the public platform to expound their views!"

That the presence of Mr. Marshall was important in Mr. Murray's eyes, that the resolution, unanimously adopted, was a child to whom he would give loving care, he made clear. That some men who would vote for it rejected it in their hearts was not unknown to him. And so he warned the delegates that when they voted for the resolution each delegate made a pledge both of himself and of his organization. And "he cannot betray them," Mr. Murray said, "either through the use of subtlety or evasion, or in hidden places or in open forums, and be loyal to the CIO. He is required, as a matter of policy, to subscribe wholeheartedly for himself and his membership to these ideals. He cannot subvert them. He is not privileged to do that. He must support them."

In subterranean cadre caves, no Judas could betray. And there could be no denials at cock-crowing time. Mr. Murray had brought even the recalcitrant into the fold. Like a general and a good shepherd he would see to it that they would stay there.

France Forever*

ANNE FREMANTLE

THE MOAT was so thickly coated with green scum that no water was visible. "I am in despair," said the pretty Lorraine hostess, whose rich industrialist husband had inherited the Le Nôtre castle from a richer uncle. "I cannot get a pair of swans from anywhere. The boys of the maquis ate my last pair."

"I'll write to Windsor and ask for a clutch of eggs next spring," gallantly promised the English colonel. He had lied about his age in order to be parachuted behind the German lines in just

* Another fragment from a travel journal.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that neighborhood, and knew all the most intimate dispositions of all the local gentry. Had he not lived amongst them for all the twenty-five years between the wars? So, when he returned to his neighbors, crowned with the bitter halo of the Resistance, there was no wonder why they fell over each other to entertain *"ce cher Courtenay"* and thus demonstrate their pro-Allied fervor at trifling trouble and cost. In fact, he had been more than a little amused by the reply of the Mayor of X. . . ., who had been asked by the Mayor of Y. . . . whether he had not yet had "our dear hero" to a *vin d'honneur*: "But, dear friend, I do not need to."

We drank our cocktails in the burning sunlight on the terrace, overlooking the stiff and splendid gardens, scarlet and purple with the inevitable geraniums and petunias. A great bed of zinnias centered what the English would call a hayfield, and the French a lawn. The gold lichen on the statues was burnished, dazzling. "Alas, the Germans shot so many of their heads off," sighed our hostess. "Thank goodness Jupiter still has his Michelangelo beard; but *poor* Apollo!"

"And look at Flora," pointed out our host; "how ungallant to decapitate the charming Flora."

General Scott, new come from Burma, sighed as he sipped. "You can't think how wonderful it is to come again into a tidy, well kept, and properly cultivated country," he said. "I live in Wiltshire, and I'm shocked each time I come home at the state of British agriculture. I'd give a lot to bring some of our farmers here to see how your folk work. And I mean work! I had to catch a train at five-thirty the other morning for my sins, and the fields were full of haymakers. And your land has a glossy look, like a properly groomed beast's coat."

We had to drive some forty miles out of our way to reach the castle, as all the bridges over the Loire had been blown up, by the Germans or by us. "For a year the Allies held the other side, and we here in Vendée still had the Germans; they held Nantes until the last," our hostess said. "My sister was in a hospital in Angers, and I had no news of her for eight months. This castle was German headquarters, and I had forty officers quartered here, besides fifteen small children—my own and various cousins. My dear Scottish governess refused to leave me. My husband was a prisoner in Germany, and she said, 'I'll stay as long as I'm any use.' Dear Miss! The Germans came for her at last, and there was nothing I could do—not the ones living here, of course; they were soldiers and couldn't have behaved more decently, but the Gestapo. I'm told she's back in Edinburgh now—but out of her mind."

We went in to lunch: hors d'oeuvres, oeufs mimosa, a wonderful gigot of lamb, with new peas and potatoes, asparagus, a salad, and crême brulée, with Anjou '43, followed by a decent claret, and champagne with the fresh wild strawberries at the end. Such meals were the rule amongst the new rich, who are frankly cultivated by many of the old aristocracy for the sake of the meals they give.

And everywhere we heard the same story: that the occupation had been tolerable so long as it was by the military. What a chance the Germans lost. They could have had the French on their side, had it not been for their civilians! Paul Valéry's son, Francois, for example, said he had never before realized the Germans as human beings: all his childhood they had been sinister ogres, until he crowded against their privates in the Metro, smelling their sweat, breathing their breath. And wherever they had passed, in Anjou, Brittany, Touraine and Vendée, all the west of France, in the local chateaux, one would see German books, German music, left openly around, and in several castles one or more daughters were planning to go to study in the French zone. The whole existentialist movement, which has permeated French life and letters, is completely and admittedly German in origin and inspiration. At another level everywhere the German prisoners of war live with the farmers, not in separate camps, as in England, and everywhere they are received *en famille,* and welcomed, given the same pay and the same treatment as French farm workers, and are generally very popular.

But anyone with English or American connections had a frightful time, and their wounds are slow to heal. One Irish woman, married to a French diplomat, told me that the Germans stole everything from her house: yacht, radio, car, bicycles, furniture, china. They were forbidden even to keep matches, or to light a fire to cook or warm themselves by. And nightly they were visited by Gestapo agents. From her windows she saw the St. Nazaire raids, and had a front seat for the almost nightly machine gunning of the parachuting crews of shot-down Allied aircraft. "Often the Germans would join us in watching from our windows," she said, tonelessly. "They did enjoy it so."

Though only a very few of the Angevin gentry had been collaborationists, almost all are Royalists, and cordially detest equally all four republics. This summer all were reading Henri, Comte de Paris's (the legitimist pretender to the French throne) book "Appel aux Français." In the lovely chapel of the Marquis de Fresnay's, where we daily heard Mass, was a banner, inscribed *"Dieu et le Roi"* and tied with black crêpe ribbon, for Louis XVI! The local MFH was in Angers jail for feeding bread to his hounds; he had been denounced by his whipper-in, whom *he* had de-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nounced for selling his wine on the black market. His cousin (who longed to see London, he told me, "because of Amber") explained that there was the most delicious galantine of pork this year, such as there would never be again, as the peasants had fed their pigs on wheat, because the price of wheat had been pegged, and it was more profitable to fatten and sell the pigs, and keep the corn for the bakers for bread.

Everyone of these county families (all of whom were *Chouans*, more or less) assured me there would be civil war this fall. "We have had a terribly poor harvest this year, and the wine, though small in quantity, will be superlative in quality. By November stomachs will be empty of food and full of drink, and there will be trouble."

Just before our arrival, there had been an unsuccessful Royalist coup, and several neighbors were out of sight for the present. When de Gaulle spoke at Rennes, the church bells throughout the countryside roused everyone to go to his meeting, and amongst the crowds that heard him thousands knelt as he passed, and kissed his cloak's hem, his boots. To the peasants, however, bread is the main issue. That bread should be rationed at all is to them a disgraceful outrage; that the French ration should be 200 grammes a day, a bare four slices, whilst the Germans get 500 grammes daily, is a disaster worse than any defeat. "Why, why, did we win?" they wail. The prices are so high that only farmers can live at all decently: a girl in service gets 150 francs a day, meat is 200 francs a pound, butter 400, eggs are sixteen francs each, and fruit, in season, never fell below 40 to 80 francs a kilo. A good average salary is 3,000 francs a month—and one meal in Paris costs 1,000 francs. The old tensions are still there, though lessened. No schoolmaster, in an average village, dare openly go to Mass; and the Catholics are proposing en bloc to refuse to pay the school taxes this fall as they will not send their children to the State schools, and the State refuses all aid to the Catholic schools. It is still difficult for a Catholic to get a civil service job in some parts, and all such jobs, as always, are a matter of political maneuvering.

But, in many ways, France is still the most civilized of all countries. Where else would the local painter and carpenter, having come up to the castle for a drink, ask, very courteously, whether it would be possible, in America, to get them some sheet music? "We have a band," they explained. "Each village has, of course, a band, but our music was most regrettably destroyed in the war. Could you possibly ask in America, in *your* village, if perhaps they have duplicate copies of band music, or perhaps whole scores of music that is now out of date, or that they do not care to play any longer? For we imagine musicians there, too, get tired of the old tunes, and are always liking to learn new ones."

The Little Man Who Ran New York

GEORGE N. SHUSTER

THE FIRST time I met Mr. La Guardia was on the occasion of a brief visit subsequent to my signing on the Board of Higher Education's dotted line. He was holding court at the weird and crowded place near the World's Fair which was then known as "Summer City Hall"; and our brief, perfunctory colloquy was sandwiched in between a reception to a young man in a motorized iron lung, a speech to what was literally a delegation of visiting firemen, and the presentation to His Honor of a scroll from a Western town the name of which I have forgotten. We conversed with the Mayor while he munched, in rolled up shirt sleeves, on a vile luncheon of frankfurters served on a paper plate. It so happens, however, that on several other occasions I rather unexpectedly talked with him at length, and possibly about matters he did not often discuss. No doubt I should add immediately that my failure to "get anything out of him" was complete. None of the sums with which I hoped to enlarge the scope of the college program could be pried loose. On the other hand he invariably received me with great courtesy, and with signs of an almost wistful interest in the academic life. Yet I did see him fire away at others with both barrels, sometimes so unreasonably and erratically that the spectacle was incredible enough to make one rub one's eyes.

All this and more came vividly to mind as I stood in the vast nave of St. John the Divine and listened to the burial service. The old words rang out over loudspeakers, among them the hauntingly beautiful text of Saint Paul as it is given in the version of King James. But who could help feeling that in this huge place Fiorello —as everybody, of course, called him—had for the first time grown very small? It wasn't that he was dead. It was merely that his whole history and temperament suggested different obsequies. He should, one thought, have been borne down crammed and populous streets, hardly wide enough to get through; and there ought to have been singing in a packed and none too beautiful church, where the women crowded into the pews and sobbed. There should have been elbows all around, and Fiorello making his last journey on earth through them, more eloquent to the emotions in his coffin than he had ever been in life.

For he was so intimate a part of the true glory of New York—of the fact that you can never tell where the man who darts around the corner is from, or by the light of what ancestral tradition

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he will speak and act. Not only are all the corners of the earth tucked into the hems of this city, but all the layers of time are likewise revealed. Whole arrays of grandmothers look out of now living eyes, and one can think of Rachel or Deirdre, or an angel in a painting by Raffaelo, or about some figure in an exotic canvas of Gauguin. One could seldom tell what ancestry Fiorello was reflecting, or to what deep atavistic mood he might have been responding. There was never a man so completely free of "race prejudice," or of group animosity. He fought for the rights of all minorities. He hated Hitler with the sort of vitriolic intensity only he could summon up. Nevertheless he talked in friendly fashion to the German-American and the Italian-American peoples of New York long after war had broken out. One of the few things he ever asked me to do as a personal favor to him was making a speech in German over a Bronx radio station for the purpose of getting everybody on the nation's bandwagon.

Sometimes he appeared in so many places and stuck his fingers in so many pies that he was likely to be considered the country's greatest fussbudget. He went to fires and supervised rescues; he accompanied the police on dangerous missions. I have thought one could understand all this best by adopting the theory that Fiorello should have been the father of fourteen children. He treated the people of New York as if they were just such a family. After food rationing became an accomplished fact, he counseled housewives on the art of cooking. He offered advice on how to bring up the young, and even on the art of nursing the sick. And he dealt with the budget of the City quite as if he had earned the whole sum which the Board of Estimate was to appropriate, and so was entitled to decide personally what bills were to be run up and how they were to be paid.

He wanted money to take care of everybody, and that was the true meaning of his "radicalism." Knowing that dollars do not rain from the clouds, he was frequently addicted to a quite remarkable and conservative scrupulousness in dealing with the sources from which municipal income flowed. Perhaps an incident drawn from my own experience with him will help to explain. The Blumenthal Mansion on Seventieth Street was about to be razed and sold. It housed a marvelous Spanish patio which the builder had imported, and was indeed the most beautiful structure of its kind in New York, and probably in the United States. For years it had been maintained by the Metropolitan Museum, and was visited chiefly by groups of students who came from all over the East to draw or just to sit in that exquisite place. It was my belief that tearing down so beautiful a house while so many matchless structures were being bombed to bits over in Europe was a deplorable act. I still think so. Then I argued long and hard to keep the place intact for young people. But La Guardia was adamant. His point was that a "tax-payer" erected on the premises would put thousands into the City Treasury and so ease the burden a little for poor people. He was sincere about this, and of course there was much to be said for his point of view. I contended that girls and boys could learn the meaning of great art there far better than they ever could in a standardized museum. Now the Mansion is down and apartments are going up. I still look at the building process ruefully. But it is always as clear as day to me that La Guardia loved young people and was deeply interested in their education. He just hated "frills." Sometimes I fancy that what he would have liked best was a system of education designed to teach children how to be honest and upright and never to spend their money foolishly.

This side of his character was manifested most completely, perhaps, in his relatively comical declaration of war on gambling and its devices, notably pinball machines. He hated the idea of anybody being fleeced out of his money, but when he thought that women and what he called "poor kids" were doing without groceries because the wage-earning father was being gypped he went on the war-path with a thoroughness and a rough-riding fanaticism which left the spectator breathless. It seems to me that Fiorello spent more time balancing the budgets of the poor than he did trying to keep a lid on metropolitan spending. He had an old-fashioned desire to see youngsters grow up straight and strong and, no doubt, tall. A little girl could always get a tear out of him. Because she might be in trouble, he rode around with fire-trucks and police patrols. He was no doubt the most lovable and the most exasperating busybody in the world.

Naturally he would not have been all this if it had not been for his sense of drama. Often people misunderstood. He could give even his impetuous, peppery moments an air of dynamic significance. Sometimes, of course, he talked like a spiteful little radical, and upon other occasions he merely indulged his histrionic talents. Nobody ever liked leaning over the rostrum in Madison Square Garden more than Fiorello did. Seeing him do so was to observe as great an actor as ever lived, and his radio shows were no less entrancing. Most of the real mistakes he made—and on his own admission some of them were "beauts"—resulted from his passionate zest in theatricals. His best speeches were no doubt the product of listening patiently to what had been said before his turn to speak came and then capitalizing on what was not so much a restressing

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the highlights as a very original emphasis on whatever was capable of evoking the strongest emotional response. His skill at this was frequently quite uncanny. When he was up to it, he could steal any kind of oratorical show. During his last years, of course, he became too introspective and much too intolerant. Perhaps he was ill before he and others realized it. But in his prime there was no one to compare with him at improvisation marked by ingenuity, candor and character.

I shall not have anything to say about his political career, if only because of my own complete aloofness from New York politics. But even the sketchiest portrait would be incomplete if one did not stress the most notable of La Guardia's traits—the ability to think far ahead, to foresee the probable consequences of events, and to summarize his views in homespun English that was at its best as clear as logic can well be. I shall never forget my conversations with him at the time when I was weighing a government appointment abroad just before the war was over. He predicted the eventual political outcome of the struggle with a realism and an insight which still seem to me phenomenal. Though to be sure he would not have lifted a finger to prevent my going, he described the futility of the mission I was contemplating with a prophetic correctness to which subsequent events added nothing. He said sadly—and long before Yalta—that Mr. Roosevelt would arrive at the same place to which Mr. Wilson came, by avoiding all the Wilsonian mistakes. He had no illusions about Europe and very few about Washington. Perhaps he never wanted anything more than he did a chance to administer Italy after the downfall of Mussolini; and I shall confess that in my opinion he would have brought to the job a drama and an energy which would have long since cemented the Italian people to the United States. He couldn't, of course, do anything with UNRRA. Nobody could have anyhow, and that sort of task was not his meat.

He had seen a good deal, known endless people, plumbed the depths of political activity. This made him in some ways cynical and therefore his own worst enemy. He could be intransigent, hotheaded, and merely wrong. I used sometimes to think that if it had not been for the handicap of his temperament he might have become a dangerous aspirant to dictatorship. Yet this was a quite mistaken estimate. Like almost everybody who has served the American public for a long time, he discovered that the only kind of hermit that flourishes in this country is the man who wears a crown. Everybody wants what you have to give, and the number of the unselfish is infinitesimal. And so in the end you become the fellow who won't come across.

There is no doubt that he enjoyed being Mayor of New York. He made it a big and bustling job. After he stepped aside, no doubt in part because he was tired and the world had got on his nerves, he was just a relic of his former self. His broadcasts grew humdrum and his articles were slovenly. Fiorello was neither a political philosopher, nor a columnist of wit and learning, nor even a writer of good advertising copy. He remained to the end what he had always really been—a man who should have had fourteen kids. It seems to me that he was simpler than his time and more astute than the majority of those who considered themselves sophisticated. Born in the days when the Social Gospel became for many Americans the true religion, he died in an hour when that Gospel seems naïve and impotent to very many. He died much too soon. There is an empty place where he used to be.

Communications

LITURGICAL PARISH MISSIONS

St. Mary's College, North East, Pa.

TO the Editors: A brief comment on Father Reinhold's "Liturgical Parish Missions" (THE COMMONWEAL, September 12). The author inadvertently answers many of the difficulties he raises, in his paragraph beginning: "Of course, if you assume that you are preaching to people who don't know the 'eternal truths' or have forgotten them, or who need cuffing about by the strongest emotional upheaval possible, then the gentle modes of the liturgy are unable to be followed by you or to furnish you with the sledge-hammer imagery you need."

Father Reinhold's assumption of the missionaries' assumption is quite accurate. It is a truism and needs no belaboring that the purpose of a "mission" today is the same as it always was, namely: *hic et nunc* conversion to Christian living, through the preaching of the eternal truths in such a manner that they stimulate to a good, worthy confession. The purpose is usually *not* directly "to help find a way into a lasting, self-activating life within the parish, the family and the community." The purpose of a mission is *not* directly to "help to integrate the life of the parish, to vivify its rhythm, and to leave the parishioners with something to go on." It is *not* directly to "help set up parish life." All these ends may be enumerated as indirect and potential effects of a good mission, but it must never be forgotten that they are *not* the direct purpose of the mission.

Why they are not should be obvious. The average mission today lasts no more than one week (for each individual group participating in the mission). There is scarcely time to aim at all these targets, no matter how noble and beneficial in themselves. The missionary's whole, consuming effort is rightly spearheaded at *hic et nunc* conversion through a good, worthy confession made while the intellectual and emotional appeal of the mission

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

exercises are still fresh in the souls of the congregation. This conversion, which it is hoped will be *permanent* conversion, and which is obviously the principal end of the mission, is brought to culmination and insured by such post-mission activities as novenas, retreats, etc., any or all of which may have as *their* principal end the desiderata enumerated in Father Reinhold's article, e.g., integration of parish activity and the like.

This brings us to Father Reinhold's pertinent question: "Do parishes which have missions in intervals of 12, 24 or 36 months need such treatment?" They do! While everyone will admit that the average mission today no longer resembles the mission of 100 and 200 years ago (especially in so-called Catholic countries) in that the mission today no longer gathers together the assemblage of bandits and brigands, cutthroats and drunkards that were more or less dragooned into making the mission in former days, nevertheless, no one of any experience will deny that there is much important spiritual house-cleaning to be done in every parish. While the grosser forms of crime—murder, robbery, rape, arson—are met with less frequently, there are nevertheless many more fashionable crimes that need checking-up today. And such checking-up as only an old-fashioned mission can accomplish! No matter how much a missionary today is constrained to straight-jacket the exercises of the mission into a schedule designed for the needs and convenience of a busy parish, he will never—*never*—omit his ferverino on General Confession.

Father Reinhold is to be commended for his fervent interest in a revival of a liturgical spirit in the parish. It goes without saying that a series of sermons—in fact, many series of sermons—on the Sacraments, the Mass, etc., would be of immense profit for every parish. May God speed the day when the exercises of the "liturgical week" will be as familiar to our people as the exercises of a mission. Is the time ripe, however, to substitute "liturgical week" for the traditional mission? Or even to combine the exercises of "liturgical week" with the devotions of the already much-curtailed mission? I think not.

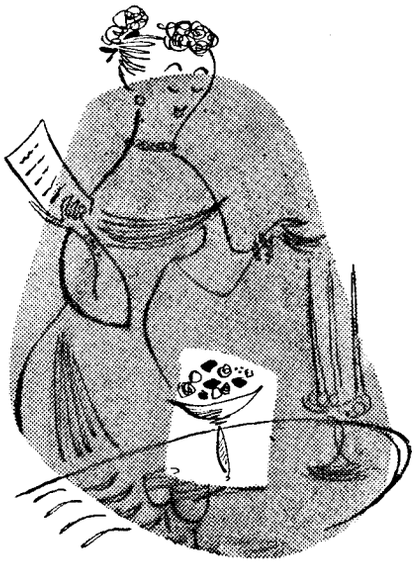
The Rev. CHARLES G. FEHRENBACH, *C.SS.R., Ph.D.*

Sunnyside, Wash.

TO the Editors: I think the kind and circumspect answer of Father Fehrenbach brings about one thing: it shows up the two trends running through the pastoral practice of our Church so well analyzed and described in Abbé Michonneau's book on the parish as a "mission center." Let us therefore agree to disagree! In Catholic countries, if there are such, missions take place at great intervals, 10, 15 and 20 years. A large cross is erected on that occasion to announce to posterity this great historic event. On those occasions the lapsed and the cut-throats are coaxed into the mission for that confession my kind opponent has in mind. That is the kind of pastoral care Father Michonneau of Colombes calls, if I remember well, the "hunter of souls" type.

But our annual missions—I have seen them in dozens of churches—are attended by practicing Catholics, nuns

B. ALTMAN & CO.
FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK



THE PERFECT TOUCH
FOR A PERFECT PARTY

BAGATELLE CANDIES

THE ORIGINAL MINIATURE CANDIES . . . DELICATE JEWEL-LIKE PIECES THAT DESERVE A SPECIAL SETTING. CENTERS OF NUTS, CREAMS, CARAMELS AND DELICIOUS CHEWY PIECES.

1 LB. TIN **2.50**
2 LB. TIN **5.00**
3 LB. TIN **7.50**
5 LB. TIN **12.50**

CANDIES, MAIN FLOOR

Also at East Orange and White Plains

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and goodly spinsters as well as couples. The emotional thrills provided by the customary, toned down or "hepped up" mission, apart from the fact that these ordinary people are less in need of it than of positive upbuilding and of "a shot in the arm," wear themselves down by repetition and a rather negative approach.

May I remind our readers that I referred to the liturgy as "the" prayer of the Church and the one common denominator all religious orders and societies should have in common, while my complaint, if I had one, was: our orders give us too little of their own particular riches; and if they do give particular things, they often leave us too many non-essential things instead of their innermost spirit. In other words: you can hardly tell a Dominican from a Jesuit mission, except that one leaves one devotion behind and the other another one. But that is not what I, for one pastor, want. I couldn't keep all the devotions going, if that were the result. My plea was: more variety of the Spirit—as reflected in the great historical waves of spirituality—held together by the one thing we all have in common, the Church's sacramental life. Nobody can say that this is done now. Most of the time this very sacramental life in its fulness—not only confession!—receives side glances instead of the full concentrated light and is approached with a negative attitude: more about "unworthy" Communions than about the full doctrine of this sacrament, for instance.

The more refined vices of our day are not cured by intermittent confessions into which you have been clubbed by emotional heavy blows, but by a *new vision* of the greater value of virtue, by a wise understanding of our people's difficulties and temptations. Momentary success is something very gratifying for the men of God who can shoot off all their ammunition (or fireworks) in one short siege, but the pastor wants also people who come in and help him and his flock to rise above the routine in his parishioners' lives and to give them a new and inspired vision.

Maybe that isn't a good answer in the eyes of Father Fehrenbach, but if he will sample some of the pastors or a few faithful, he may find that a new form of periodical and more frequent "mission," besides retreats, which reach only an élite, I am afraid to say, must be developed.

The Rev. H. A. REINHOLD.

FOR C.A.R.E. PARCELS

THE International Fellowship of Reconciliation has called to our attention word from Vera Brittain about the plight of Catholic theological students in Cologne. The address: Heinrich Seise, Bunker Vogelsang, Pedagogische Accademie, Bickendorf, Cologne, Germany. An appeal for food packages has also reached us recently from: Révérende Mère Prieure, Soeurs Dominicaines, Sechelles, Cuvilly, Oise, France.

A group of Sisters in Belgium, who fled from the Nazis in 1938, report great need in the convents of their Order in Germany. Among the houses mentioned are: Rev. Mother Josefa Aloysia, Frankentalstrasse 3, Stolberg, Rheinland, Germany, and Rev. Mother Maria Armella, Jacobstrasse 12, Aachen, Rheinland, Germany.

The Stage & Screen

Medea

IT IS necessary to say at once that Robinson Jeffers's "free adaptation" of Euripides has resulted in an astonishing collaboration: a great performance. If the advance promotion stories are true, and Judith Anderson did indeed solicit the poet for his version of the "barbarian bride," he has, reversibly, solicited from her a most stern accomplishment. I think the result is monumental. And I think it should rather be described than analyzed. The script itself has been in print for more than a year now and has been worried by far firmer scholars than I shall ever be; the nibbling, useless problem of adaptations has only too recently taken space in this column; sometimes it seems to me impossible for an eager critic ever to reach performance at all. But in this instance I find there is only one *reflection* which I feel should be recorded: and this will be that the truly Euripidean compassion of the Chorus (the Corinthean women) seems somehow miraculously to be justified, even extended, by Miss Anderson's attack. I am unsure whether to deal this to writing or playing, but the distinction is not important. Alien, awful, alone, this Medea is dark, sinuous, preying, fawning, shrieking, and incessant. Is it possible to say she is also pitiable? Yes. Violating every possible archetypal ethic, is it possible to say she is still a woman? Yes. This is a sheer line and is maintained. Add to it in a scene, whose necessarily bright air, massive architecture, and harbor view preclude any fumbling motions—a variety of pose and gesture which rivets the attention. And to a prosody, which literally wrestles and hews into your ear, add a precision of diction, an arpeggio of tone which is inescapable. In a period of broadcast ovations, instructed applause, and schemed polls, I think there is only one excuse for the kind of loud, rearing, stamping homage Miss Anderson is receiving at her plain curtain-calls at the National: art.

There are further credits—some debits—and I think it's best simply to transcribe my program notes. . . . Florence Reed's support as the Nurse is no morsel of the evening. Her diction is (again) wonderful. Most of all, she is the right heroic size. I don't know whether the exact recurrent sound of the sailed sea is due John Gielgud's direction, or Ben Edward's design, but it is important as a perfect effect. Mr. Gielgud's placements seemed excellent; his casting odd: the important children were awkwardly chosen and only one member of the choral trio—Grace Mills—really fitted. As for his handling of Jason, this had better be skipped. His lack of passion is almost suitable, but he hasn't the breath for the lines; and in any case, there ought to be passion in reserve. Tibor Serly's music: fine. As I am most of all interested in poetry, Jeffers's several slow ascents into the formal simile—particularly as paused and articulated by Miss Anderson—seemed to me current history. No interpolated action, no ad lib. That's all, I think. Conclusion: to be experienced. (*at the National*)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Druid Circle

I DON'T know what to say of the present van Druten. The Sunday sheets have it that he has pondered this work for years and years and, because of some precipitate incident, was able suddenly to resolve it. The fable gives us another ("Young Woodley") schoolroom set in a small university town near the borders of England and Wales in the early 1920's. The place is coeducational, although stuffy, and a girl and a boy are in love. An important older professor, wedded to a Kraft-Ebbing mother, resents the boy's brilliance, steals one of his love-letters and forces him to read it aloud before the girl, thereby causing an almost suicide, the almost wreck of a younger colleague's ambitions, plus his mother's almost death. It's all inch-high psychoanalytical stuff, and I'm afraid a relished display of masochism on the part of the author. Of all the ranging sentimentalities common to our state of "chassis," I do honestly think that the Freudian brand is the worst. Springing, as it must, either from autobiography else case-history primer stuff, it seems to demand for someone's "Little Id" the exact amount of heartrent understanding that our fathers devoted to "Little Nell." And "Little Nell" was at least a character, or surrounded by characters. It's a tiresome business. At all events, it must be admitted that the old van Druten touch still spins: every clue is traceable, the groundplan is sure, and there is, as always, the kind of histrionic scheming which must intrigue good actors. In this affair, the work of Leo G. Carroll, particularly Lillian Bronson, and most particularly Ethel Griffies is honest, skilled, entertaining. In fact the entire cast deserves comment, although not, I think, tickets. (*at the Morosco*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Something New, Something Borrowed

THE MAIN thing to be said about this week's screen offerings is that they are different. Whether this difference works out entirely to the audience's advantage is another question.

"Man About Town" is a French film, but instead of its having the usual English sub-titles that accompany a foreign-language picture, the star, Maurice Chevalier, serves as narrator and translator. On the whole this device is good for it keeps our eyes from being overworked by watching actors as well as the printed words below. However in this case, it frequently leads to confusion. Chevalier's charmingly-broken English is not always easy to catch and you find yourself straining to hear the French sound track (so you can put to some use that language in which you minored at college) and straining still harder not to miss any of Chevalier's clever comments. The fact that this narrator plays the lead in the picture does not particularly add to the ease with which you follow the proceedings.

The film itself, however, is a delight—thanks mainly to René Clair's direction and production. The story (a middle-aged-boy-meets-a-young-girl affair) is rather fragile, but Clair has decorated it with a beautifully lighted reproduction of 1906 Paris and with a series of minor characterizations that are done to perfection. Chevalier, portraying a not-so-young motion picture director in those early days of flickers, is his amiable self as the man who decides to protect the daughter of the only woman he really loved. Needless to say, this "protection" turns to love, which is not returned. As the girl and as the young man who is more suitable for her, Marcelle Derrien and Francois Perier are attractive to look at but rather limited as actors. The supporting cast is excellent and seems to be having a grand time doing all the zany things that Clair gets his minor players to do so well. A 1906 moving picture studio gives Clair plenty of opportunity for satire. Obviously "Man About Town" won't appeal to moviegoers looking for a conventional boy-meets-girl, but it should interest and amuse those grown-ups who like cinematic art and a touch of cynicism with their sentiment.

"That Hagen Girl" deals with the sad lot of an illegitimate child in a small town; and while this subject could possibly be material for an intelligent movie, this one is not the answer. Its characterizations are shallow; its plot uses the stacked-card system from beginning to end; and its quick shuffling of these cards at the conclusion to make things come out happily causes one to wonder why on earth these people didn't talk up at the beginning and save us and the actors a lot of time. Shirley Temple as the girl of dubious parentage does the best she can with the rôle, and so do Ronald Reagan, as the man thought to be her father, Dorothy Peterson, Charles Kemper, Lois Maxwell and others with parts that are poorly written. At one point in this sob story when *everything* begins to happen to "that Hagen girl" (she's kicked out of the school play, turned down by her boy-friend for his fraternity dance, rushed into the school play at the last minute while her "mother" is dying, expelled from school) you decide that if small town people could treat anyone this way, you want none of them. You'll probably want none of the movie either.

Cinematically *"Nightmare Alley"* is the most promis-

THEATRE GUILD PRODUCTIONS
A NEW MUSICAL PLAY **ALLEGRO**
Music by RICHARD RODGERS — *Book & Lyrics by* OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd — *Entire Production Staged by* AGNES de MILLE
MAJESTIC THEATRE 44th St. W. of Broadway. Evgs. 8:30 Matinees Thursday & Saturday, 2:30

THE MUSICAL HIT **OKLAHOMA!**
Based on Lynn Riggs' "Green Grow the Lilacs"
Music by RICHARD RODGERS — *Book & Lyrics by* OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd — *Directed by* ROUBEN MAMOULIAN — *Dances by* AGNES de MILLE
ST. JAMES Theatre 44th St. W. of Broadway. Evgs. 8:30 Matinees Thursday and Saturday 2:30

"A very funny play, brilliantly written, acted and staged." —*Robert Garland, Journal-American.*
MAX GORDON *Presents*
BORN YESTERAY
The Hilarious Comedy Hit by GARSON KANIN
LYCEUM THEA. 45th St. E. of B'way. CH. 4-4256
Evenings 8:40. Matinees Wednesday and Saturday 2:40

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing film of the lot; but you have to have such a strong stomach to take it that you better approach it with caution. It starts with carnival scenes and introduces, for the first time in movies I believe, a geak. This is the lowest form of carnival life, a "half-man, half-beast attraction" who wallows around in a pen and eats live chickens. For such work he gets a bottle of whiskey a day and a place to sleep it off. Having established this unsavory occupation at the beginning, the film concentrates on a barker, an extremely selfish and unpleasant person who uses his friends as stepping stones to better jobs. You realize as you watch him in action that he'll rise and rise, then fall with a thud, and eventually become a geak. He does. Tyrone Power plays the rôle exceedingly well; and Edmund Goulding has directed this story with a strong realism that uses cinema effectively. Joan Blondell, Helen Walker, Taylor Holmes, Ian Keith and others turn in good performances that heighten the picture's powerful impact. But when it is finished, you wonder how far movies can go with unpleasant subject matter. This one gives a vicarious thrill as well as several very queasy moments.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Labor Movement

The AFL Puts on a Fight

NO ONE would have dreamed it a few years ago, but things have reached the point where a convention of the AFL has more drama, more conflict to it than a convention of the CIO. This fact was brought out all the more clearly this year by the holding of the two meetings simultaneously, the AFL in San Francisco and the CIO in Boston.

The cause of the AFL's new-found lease on rambuctiousness is, of course, John L. Lewis. Lewis returned to the AFL in January of 1946 and remained more or less quiescent during last year's sessions. This year he exploded with a roar. The roar was muffled somewhat by an avalanche of anti-Lewis votes, but meanwhile he had gotten some very purple abuse on the record and stirred up the most lively row to trouble those serene circles since 1935.

The question at issue was the filing of non-communist affidavits by the AFL's president, secretary-treasurer and 13 vice-presidents, of whom the miners' chief was No. 11. The National Labor Relations Board had just voted 4 to 1 for expediency over logic and reversed the ruling of its counsel, Robert Denham, who had made the mistake of taking the Taft-Hartley Act to mean what it said, namely, that all officials of the AFL must sign the affidavits before any local could do business with the NLRB.

But even though this reversal had cleared the way for the AFL's 105 international unions, there were still some 286,000 members in AFL federal locals (attached directly to the national office) who could not use the NLRB unless the top officers signed. In previous sessions of the executive council, Big Bill Hutcheson (carpenters) had sided with Lewis, but at the convention Old Eyebrows stood all alone among the big shots in favor of refusal to sign.

Those who bowed to the Taft-Hartley Act, he said, reminded him of the Biblical passage, "Lions led by Asses." The AFL, he said, was like a "mighty host of 8,000,000 workers marching across the plains of America and having their thinking done for them by fat and stately asses."

He also said, "I think this Federation has no head; I think its neck has just grown up and haired over." He called the AFL leaders "craven" and said they were "groveling on their bellies" before a Congress which when it "sees us run (still on their bellies presumably), will fashion some sharp spears and make us run faster." He took a sharp dig, based largely on truth, at the AFL's organizing methods when he said that the Federation had built its membership "by filing along behind the armored divisions of the United Mine Workers and mopping them up." (Truth, that is, if you substitute CIO for UMW.)

Once again Lewis threatened to resign, this time from "the debased council." The delegates, however, did not consider his loss irreparable and voted him down by more than 600 to 100. During the election of officers he and his miners sulked in their hotel rooms and Dan Tracy (electrical workers) replaced him in the top echelon. But it is doubtful if Lewis will take a walk from the AFL itself. He has taken so many walks now, and him no longer young, that he is apparently beginning to feel it in the legs.

William Green and George Meany were re-elected unanimously to the positions of president and secretary-treasurer, and Meany got a tremendous hand because he had stood up to Lewis and traded insults with equal vigor, if not equal pungency. Otherwise the convention's most significant action was the creation of a thing called "Labor's Education and Political League," which will try to apply some of the energy of the CIO's Political Action Committee to the AFL's old adage, "Reward your friends and punish your enemies." Whether it actually will or not remains to be seen. Lewis has waked them up, all right. The question is: can they stay awake?

The CIO Has Reason to Worry

AT THE CIO convention, on the other hand, the tradition of unanimous votes—one of the most disturbing and unnatural traditions in the world—went on more or less intact. The reason for this is that Philip Murray, president of the CIO, seems to have convinced himself that he is sitting on a powder keg that may blow up at any minute and knock a big hole in the CIO.

In order to avoid this disaster Murray calls the executive board into session before each convention and whips the top leaders into line behind some kind of compromise. For example, this year the big compromise was on the foreign policy resolution which everybody voted for and about whose exact meaning nobody could agree.

The big—much too big—concession granted to the communists was that the resolution failed to support, or even mention, the Marshall Plan by name. The concession to the anti-CP's was that Marshall himself was invited to speak to the convention, with which he made a tremendous hit, and Murray went out of his way to praise Marshall and the Plan and to take several cracks at Russia and the American Russia Firsters.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The best crack of all, however, was taken by George Baldanzi, eloquent vice-president of the textile workers, who in the lively debate on the resolution made the observation that "the President (Truman) could not be a Hitler, for if he were, Stalin would have worked out a pact with him." Which brought down the house.

All in all, the Stalinists lost far more than they gained. They lost their friend R. J. Thomas (auto workers) among the nine vice-presidents; R. J. stepping down in favor of O. A. Knight (oil worker) when he learned that Murray would not support him for re-election. This leaves Walter Reuther as the only vice-president from the auto workers and strengthens him for the coming showdown with the Thomas forces in his own union.

They lost out too in their effort to have the convention urge CIO affiliates not to sign the non-communist affidavits. This was a failure also relegated to the wings and anticipated by the decision of six CIO unions to go ahead and sign. These included the strategic clothing workers, the textile workers (these two being the fourth and fifth largest in the CIO), the woodworkers, brewery workers, hosiery workers, and plaything and novelty workers. There will probably be a parade of signers now, for few unions are willing to sacrifice what small advantages the NLRB can give them, and even fewer are willing to expose their flanks to AFL raiding parties, for a principle as shadowy as that involved in the refusal to sign. Unless, of course, they actually are CP's.

Perhaps it is a good thing Marshall showed up, however. If it had not been for the flurry which his appearance kicked up, people might have wondered, as they have often wondered at AFL conventions, why they don't dispense with the convention entirely and just hold meetings of the executive board. From there the next step is to hold your sessions in Miami. And from there it's not far to the stagnant waters of decay.

JOHN C. CORT

M. V. A.

JAMES RORTY

PERHAPS what we needed in order to break the log-jam of bureaucratic vested interests that has been holding up the MVA was not another bad flood—we have had that—but another good book. If so, Rufus Terral's "The Missouri Valley"* may turn the trick. It is one of the ablest regional studies that has yet appeared, and being well and popularly written, it is likely to do an effective job of public education.

Terral's method of organizing his extremely complex and difficult material is to assemble the major elements of his problem and then present them one by one as stories. In a brilliant first chapter he describes the truly formidable hugeness and variety of the terrain: its half million square miles of mountains, semi-arid and drought-menaced High Plains, fertile prairies and flood-harassed lowlands. The Missouri watershed includes all or part of Nebraska, Montana, the Dakotas, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Missouri, Minnesota and even a small piece of Canada. From this area come half of the nation's production of wheat and rye, a fourth of our sheep and horses, a sixth of our cattle and hogs. Six billion dollars worth of gold, copper, silver, lead, zinc and coal have been extracted from the Rocky Mountain section of the watershed in Colorado and Montana. Eight million people live in the valley—ranchers, farmers, miners, city industrial workers.

In short, the Missouri Valley has everything, including an incomparable collection of the most critical and baffling problems of conservation and resource-utilization that today beset the nation. Merely to look realistically at the variety and acuteness of these problems and the extreme difficulty of achieving an integrated approach to them is enough to give any honest regional planner the jitters. But to contemplate what has happened and will continue to happen for lack of such an approach is worse—so much worse that one finishes Terral's rather terrifying exposition with mixed emotions of dismay and resolution.

We have no choice but to plan, we had better make it good, and we had better make it soon. The Pick-Sloan "Plan" is not a plan at all; merely a political deadfall, hastily constructed by the Army Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation in order to obstruct the march of the MVA advocates and protect their own job interests. Terral calls it "the Fake MVA . . . the betrayal of engineering by engineers." It fulfils none of the stiff requirements of real planning with respect to engineering research, economic analysis, administrative policy and technique, and multi-dimensional synthesis. It doesn't even embody the admission that common honesty should have dictated, namely that much of the data necessary for planning is not yet in hand; that many of the technical answers are not known or immediately knowable.

The first task of a Missouri Valley Authority, when as and if we get one, will be, not to rush into building dams, deepening navigation channels, or launching new irrigation projects, but to do the essential technical work of research and planning that has not thus far been done and that, on the record, neither the Army Engineers nor the Bureau of Reclamation is sufficiently disinterested to do.

Should we remove 900,000 people from the Great Plains, as the Study of Population Distribution, financed by the Rockfeller Foundation, has recommended? Or should we adopt the plan of the Bureau of Reclamation, irrigate 5,000,000 more acres, and bring over 600,000 newcomers into the Missouri Valley? Somewhere, probably somewhere between these extremes, a decision has to be made, a policy formulated, a set of planning blueprints evolved undistorted by the pressures of sectional or national politics. Admittedly that is a large order, but national security and survival require that it be met, and soon. Writes Terral:

> Developing the Missouri Valley will be expensive; by anyone's calculations it will cost well over a billion dollars. But not developing it would be more expensive still—in fact, financially unfeasible. A single depression has required the federal and state governments to pour into North Dakota as much relief money as the entire assessed valuation of the state. A single flood has cost $50,000,000—and although the money was expended, neither the valley nor the nation has anything to show for it. A single drouth has put one seventh of the nation's land in dire jeopardy of having to be abandoned . . . Unless the people of the United States are willing to go on buying a large part of the nation back out of bankruptcy at irregular intervals—unless they are reconciled to weakness and instability in a vast region that should be one of the principal sources

*The Missouri Valley. Rufus Terral. Yale. $3.75.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the nation's strength—failure to develop the Missouri Valley is not to be thought of.

Terral's demolition of the Pick-Sloan Plan and his argument for the creation of an MVA—with a more specific and carefully considered Congressional mandate than that given to the TVA—are contained in the last sixty pages of his book. Neither would be so convincing but for the data he piles up in the preceding chapters on soil, water and the lack of it both on the surface and underground, on the crippling idiocies of present water laws and freight rates, on phosphate resources in the intermountain area and spreading phosphate deficiency in the soils of the cornbelt, on the potentialities of hydroelectric power and irrigation, and especially on the terrific need for the long-time research in soil, water and weather problems that isn't being done because it lacks tax-appeal. A running fire of anecdote and illustration enlivens this data.

There are gaps in the book, some of them regrettable, like the failure to blueprint in more detail the lineup of farmer, labor, and business pressure groups for and against an MVA.

Terral or other writers will have to supply these lacks. There is need for more books both on particular aspects of the MVA struggle and on problems of resource utilization in other regions.

A word is in order about how the book came to be written. Terral is an alumnus of the Chattanooga *Times* where he covered the development of the TVA, and a past and a present member of the staff of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch,* which got into the fight for an MVA early and clearly intends to stay with it. It took that much background to get a good book written on the Missouri Valley.

More Books of the Week

Thérèse. François Mauriac. Translated by Gerard Hopkins. Holt. $3.00.

THIS English version of one of François Mauriac's major works, "Thérèse Desqueyroux," offers in addition two short stories and another novel entitled "The End of the Night."All of them are concerned with the destiny of the poisoner Thérèse, whose case was dismissed in criminal court, but who is doomed to pay with years of desolate suffering and haunting remembrances. François Mauriac himself has been haunted by Thérèse Desqueyroux and has gone on telling her life in a series of successive writings, the last of which dates back to 1935. So much of what belongs to the period between the two wars has become distant and stale, if not entirely outdated. But Mauriac's "Thérèse" still pulsates with life. Though reflecting distinctly the decades preceding the second World War (with all their intellectual refinement, psychological probing and spiritual anguish) these pages belong to no particular time, because they remain true at all times. The excellent translation by Gerard Hopkins is faithfully moulded on the original; it is as if Mauriac were retelling the story; once more we hear the heart-breaking yet ever restrained confession, as horrible as the cry which dies on the sufferer's lips before it is uttered.

This is the story of the French *province,* of the "South-Western land of heath and pine," where men grow rich and thrifty by selling timber and resin, are tormented by sin and have dark visions of God. Years after its first publication, "Thérèse Desqueyroux," emerges as a masterful, beautifully written work, relating a hideous plot, yet never exaggerating its aspects; all that it does is to magnify like the lens of a microscope the germs and miasma of selfish, secluded lives. The tale is so admirably wrought, so complete, so hard and clear, that it makes one think of a piece of amber formed from the resin of those very pines, and still retaining the intense pitiless glow of the South-Western sun. How Mauriac stresses the burning heat, the parched, thirsting earth, which is as the symbol of arid souls! "I know nothing of love," Thérèse admits, "save that it is the constant object of my desire, a desire that possesses me and blinds me, setting my feet on the ways of the waste land, dashing me against the walls, forcing me into bogs and quagmires, stretching me in the muddy ditches of life." Thérèse has known hell on earth, is inhabited by hell; after her attempt to poison her husband, she has followed strange and sombre paths, and has distilled in human souls, including her own, dangerous philtres, which cannot be bought at the chemists with a forged prescription. Yet through excruciating suffering, through desolate days and nights, through self-judgment and self-humiliation, she is drifting nearer and nearer to the dim bank, which offers the promise of that "charity, which is the drop of water in hell asked of Lazarus." But to whom is hell reserved? to the criminal or to the hard-hearted and selfish creatures who have provoked the crime? Thérèse tells us in her confession that through administering poison she broke the walls of a cell in which she was buried alive. And indeed her confession is more damning for her victims than for herself. However, François Mauriac does not extenuate the crime. He depicts Thérèse as "odious," as a "monster," but he also tells us: "One can make the most contrary judgments about the same person, and yet be right, that is all a question of the way the light falls." This impossibility of being completely "sized up" and fully judged by human standards is what distinguishes real, living persons from "characters of fiction."

Thérèse is a living person, she has come to life forever through the desperate act of breaking the walls of her cell; there is in her that which Mauriac calls the "spirit's mystery," to be recognized by the eyes of love and to be judged by God alone. "Stretched out in the muddy ditches of life," Thérèse knows something of the agony of the Cross, and Mauriac spares her no pang of suffering. Yet she remains to the end a delicate and noble figure, with the "high cheek-bones," and "domed brow," not beautiful, but irresistibly charming even in her bleak middle-age. She moves towards her last hour, irrevocably stricken in soul and flesh; yet she realizes almost joyfully that "the end of life" is also "the end of the night."

Where does sin end, and salvation begin? Mauriac draws no definite line, for this too is a mystery. Thérèse is neither the repentant Magdalen nor the unrepentant small-town murderer. The author has bestowed on her his own gift of pitiless introspection and self-analysis, which digs deep into the soul, until the most secret wounds are uncovered—wounds of sin, but also wounds of love. In a short preface to "The End of the Night," François Mauriac tells us that when he wrote this fourth part of the story, he did not describe Thérèse's last moments, because he did not find the priest capable of receiving her confession. But he adds that now he knows

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that such a man exists, truly expressing the charity of God which she is awaiting so desperately; therefore writes Mauriac, "I know now how Thérèse entered into the eternal radiance of death." HELEN ISWOLSKY.

The Heretics. Humphrey Slater. Harcourt. $2.75.

IT IS NOT too pleasant for a Catholic to read the first half of this novel, and it is not too pleasant for a communist to read the second half. The book is composed of two stories, connected only by a common theme: fanaticism. The first story tells what happened to a group of children when they found themselves without any parents because their parents had been burned at the stake for being Albigensians, i. e., heretics. The time for that story is AD 1197 to AD 1212; the place is Avignon in Southern France. The second story tells what happened to a group of British volunteers in the Republican Army in Spain (AD 1936 to AD 1939) at a time when you could be a heretic also if the communists said you were. Contemporary punishment for heresy, although varied, does not include burning at the stake—at least not with proper ceremonial—but it is not less final.

The delightful, the good, the charming little children of Avignon played in the garden of their house, and along the banks of the river Rhône, at being Pope, at being Albigensians. Then the terror came, the "purge"; the parents of the little children went to prison; the little children, the dear little children, were left alone, and they were hungry. They made a game of stealing while they were only hungry, and when they were famished they stole in order to survive. When the necessary business of stealing became the only serious business of life the dear little ones joined an increasing number of other children, older and younger, who were similarly in distress, forming bands which stole with violence, and murdered many people and lived off the land like rapacious and miniature soldiers. The dear little children became entirely depraved, vicious and ruthless, and so dangerous to the towns and countrysides of Southern France that when the "Children's Crusade"—with its religious origins whatever they may have been — was formed to liberate Jerusalem, the occasion was seized upon by the harassed authorities as a practical, and conveniently idealistic, means of getting these children, whom no one wanted and all feared, out of the country "anywhere, anywhere out of the world." So they were rounded up; many of them died before they reached the port of embarkation; others died in the dark holds of sailing vessels; the survivors reaching foreign ports were washed, dressed, hair-combed and sold as slaves.

In the Spanish War story, there is a reference to the Russian children who, not so many years ago, provided similar difficulties to the Russian authorities when, in such great numbers, they, also, became wanderers and homeless because their parents, too, had died unnaturally, or were in Siberia; and they had to fend for themselves.

If I speak only about the first story, the French story of the Middle Ages, despite the great interest of the second, it is because I am not a communist and do not have to search my conscience about what the communists did in Russia or in Spain in their efforts to preserve orthodoxy. I am a Catholic, and the theory and subsequent action that burned the Avignon parents in the presence of the Avignon children (who did not recognize them in the odd symbolic garments in which they were dressed for the occasion) force me to speak out my mind.

For the author, there is no difficulty. We are in the presence of fanaticism, and fanatics, religious or political, prefer to burn or shoot those who are close to them, to punish any intellectual deviation, rather than those who are wholly outside their system. Thus, for the communist, it is those who follow Trotsky, rather than those who would like to make a lot of money, who are the enemies to be destroyed; for the Catholic Church it is those who provoke heresy within the Church, rather than the pagans, who have to be dealt with. The Inquisition and the OGPU (or whatever they call it now) concern themselves with the errors of the faithful. The author of "Heretics" understands the matter in the sense that he understands that family quarrels are the most bitter.

But he shows no signs of understanding how extremely important it is, both for the Church and for the Communist Party, to make sure that each institution should carry its doctrine, untouched, undiluted, the one through the ages, the other through the course of the revolution. To Mr. Slater, a purge, religious or political, is a cruel act, and worse than its cruelty, is the undoubted fact that men whose convictions are sincere and whose lives and devotion are exemplary are broken morally by torture, humiliated as human beings, and then killed—merely because Authority has decided that they have deviated from official doctrine. To a Catholic as to a Communist "official" doctrine is the truth, and both communists and Catholics know the terrible responsibility which rests upon the heads of their organizations to preserve this truth. For each of them, if that truth should ever be lost the world is lost—for the Catholic, the knowledge of God is lost also, and that means the deprivation through eternity of His presence. Sin is man's condition; the knowledge of God persists unless man deliberately rejects it. So that sin is less important than knowledge, and knowledge becomes impossible—if the Church which holds the truth allows it to be mislaid, or changed, or qualified or distorted. That is the reason for the Inquisition.

It is the reason, and I reject it as a valid reason. I understand it, and I do not know what I should have believed had I lived in those ages in which cruelty was universal. I know that many good men believed that they were saving truth and saving the souls of those they tortured to obtain a recantation of error. I know that the Church has saved the truth, and that these foul means were used. I do not know that the truth was saved *because* these means were used. I believe that the truth was saved because God promised that it would be saved. That is all I have to believe. I reject coercion, torture, cruelty as permissible means to save the Christian Faith at any age, at any time. I understand that there was a terrible problem and a fearful dilemma that was faced by the men of the Inquisition. I believe they adopted the wrong solution.

That is why I understand the communist problem of orthodoxy, and that is why I can say that I believe that they adopted the wrong solution in their understandable efforts to preserve their truth.

"Heretics" might have been a stronger book, intellectually speaking, had there been greater insight into the serious problem of maintaining orthodoxy. But it has the merit of forcing anyone of good faith, Catholic or Communist, to weigh his conscience before the facts of the past and the present. C. G. PAULDING.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ST. THOMAS
MILITARY ACADEMY

A Catholic Preparatory School for Boys. Classified by War Dept. as an "essentially military" school. R.O.T.C. Highest War Department designation. Fully accredited. Well-rounded sports program. Conducted by priests of the Archdiocese of St. Paul assisted by lay faculty. Military instruction by U. S. Army officers. Catalog.

Address Very Rev. Vincent J. Flynn, President, Box 8.
St. Thomas Military Academy, St. Paul 1, Minn.

SETON HILL COLLEGE
GREENSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

Pre-Professional Training for Medicine, Law, and Social Service. Teacher Education.

Degrees in Liberal Arts, Music, Home Economics

Accredited by Association of American Universities

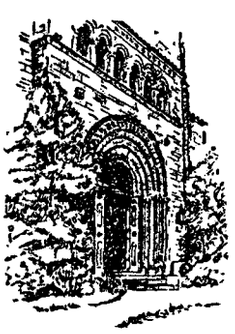
Women from 11 foreign countries and 37 American States

College of
CHESTNUT HILL
Chestnut Hill
Pennsylvania

Conducted by the Sisters of St. Joseph

Approved by the Association of American Universities.

For further information write to the Registrar.



Prospective students should make early application.

ANNHURST COLLEGE
SOUTH WOODSTOCK, CONNECTICUT
Accredited College Conducted by the Daughters of the Holy Ghost
Liberal Arts College for Women. Courses: Language and Literature; Natural and Social Sciences; Pre-Medical; Preparation for Social Service; Teacher Training for High School. Majors: English, French, Spanish, Latin; Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics; History, Sociology. Unusual opportunities in French.
Address: Office of The Dean, Box 569, Putnam, Conn.

Readers in Metropolitan New York:
Each Monday, 7:15 to 7:30 p.m.
An editor of THE COMMONWEAL speaks over
WFUV
Fordham University's New FM Station
90.1 Megacycles — Channel 211

When the Mountain Fell. C.-F. Ramuz. Pantheon. $2.50.

THE MOUNTAIN has always been a dominating image. It is to the mountain that we are told to lift our eyes for peace. It is upon the mount that wisdom has been found. To climb the highest mountains in the teeth of danger stands symbol for moral victory.

But, like most of man's images, the mountain too has its reverse side. Swollen streams, boiling eruptions, avalanches sweeping down from the mountain spell fear and ruin. Towering so far above our frail securities, the mountain stands as much for doom as for salvation. People of all ages have cried out, as in the words of the Negro spiritual: "Rocks and mountains, don't fall on me."

Here, in this story by the late, loved Swiss writer, Charles-Fernand Ramuz, a mountain actually falls. It wipes from the map an entire valley region. Taking this historical landslide in the Swiss Alps for the pivot of his tale, the author describes it first through the eyes of the villagers in the valley below who saw it happen, and then through the memory of a man who was buried by it and yet returned.

The village, lying well below the valley of Derborence upon which the mountain fell, was not large, but among the souls it housed could be found the same variety and the same unity which exist wherever people live together. It was a kind of microcosm made up of the brave and the fearful, the fit and the unfit, determined—as we are all determined—to survive. It was a reasonably happy, reasonably peace-loving village—as all villages are—until its people awoke to disaster.

On the clear June night when, for reasons known only to God, the mountain fell, many of the men from the village, being shepherds by profession, had already gone far up the valley of Derborence to their usual summer pastures. Among the women and children whom they had left behind in the village was Thérèse. She had only been married for two months, and the parting from her husband, Antoine, was sharpened now that she knew she was with child. What she could not know, of course, when the ominous dust-filled dawn revealed the tragedy in which the men in the upper valley were engulfed, was that Antoine had decided the very night when the mountain fell upon him that he would go down to see her in three days. Nor did she know that it was only the prospect of seeing her which had finally let him sleep.

On the day after the mountain fell, from out of the wreckage of Derborence, one shepherd was borne down to the village on a stretcher and promptly died. Of the others, and these included Thérèse's husband Antoine, there was no sign. But more than seven weeks later, long after hope had been abandoned, the only survivor of the cataclysm appeared like a ghost, creeping and desolate, close by his home.

From the time when the author takes you into the boulder-strewn ravine out of which, inch by tortured inch, Antoine has scratched his way, the whole story gains in tensity. It rises from the stunned, trance-like plane on which it began into a reality sharp with insight and emotion. What has seemed, up to this point, like a remote picture seen through the wrong end of a telescope, becomes life-sized. From here on such characters as Plon, the old shepherd who believed in the devil, and the men of the village whom Plon kept from entering the valley

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of destruction even to save a man's life; above all the figures of Antoine and Thérèse, he in mortal struggle with himself as he awakes to the full knowledge of what has happened and she in mortal struggle to save him—these people achieve an almost majestic stature.

Charles-Fernand Ramuz wrote a deliberate, stripped prose which, in translation, reads well so far as the descriptive passages are concerned. But in the dialogue, for which the author's ear was beautifully tuned, the translator fails to strike the same note. However, even in English, "When the Mountain Fell," though more like a song on one swelling line of melody than a symphonic novel, must be acknowledged as the work of a noble talent.

VIRGILIA PETERSON.

The Passion Left Behind. Lewis Crommelin Masefield. Macmillan. $2.75.

A STUDY in motives behind not only actions, but emotions and thoughts. The plot—two young men working in a publishing firm in pre-war London, and shaping their own lives, one by being successful and the other by understanding himself. Other characters gravitate around those two. Except for the woman, who remains unconvincing, all the characters are handled by someone familiar with the intricacies of human beings and the complexity which stands back of apparently simple thoughts, emotions or actions. This is not the work of a fiction writer but of some one curious about the inner workings of human beings as an engineer might be about a piece of machinery. It is the taking apart of people with the thoroughness and integrity of a scientist. Somewhat reminiscent of Proust, without the magic touch, Lewis Masefield shows in this book that had he lived he would have made a distinguished contribution to the study of human beings. His father, John Masefield, has contributed a biographical introduction which should have been published separately. It weighs the book down and its dithyrambic tone, though probably absolutely justified, might even prejudice the reader. That the book can survive that introduction is perhaps its best recommendation.

CLAIRE HUCHET BISHOP.

Adversary in the House. Irving Stone. Doubleday. $3.00

THE reviewer admits at the outset to a personal prejudice against fictionalized biography—which will explain in part why it took him so long to finish a book about a man (Eugene V. Debs) and about two movements (the labor movement and Socialism) in which he has more than a passing interest. Another personal and unfavorable reaction right at the outset—there is a little too much in the book about the "adversary in the house" (Deb's selfish, snobbish, uncooperative wife) and about his mother and father, his brother and his sisters, and his first love, Julia, and not enough, for the reviewer's taste, about the labor movement in which Debs began his phenomenal career and the Socialist movement in which he ended it. What's more, there doesn't seem to be complete agreement even among the experts as to whether or not Mrs. Debs was actually as distasteful as the author, in spite of his obvious efforts to underline her good points as well as her bad, eventually makes her out to be. But perhaps that's beside the point. The more serious objection, from the reviewer's point of view, is the dearth of original material about the public, as opposed to the private life of gentle Gene.

The American Philosophy of Law

Francis P. LeBuffe, S.J., Ph.D. and James V. Hayes, LL.B.

Here is the eagerly awaited fourth edition of the book widely known and acclaimed under its former title, "Jurisprudence." The authors have completely revised and enlarged this edition so that it now contains more than twice the matter of the third edition.

The internationally renowned scholar, Moorhouse F. X. Millar, S.J., thus appraises the book:

This book is a veritable gold mine for those who want to know the sound principles of law and understand at the same time the sources of all the terrible confusion that afflicts the minds of even our best lawyers, in respect to the rational justification and moral foundations of the positive law. It is the only book extant that would truly meet their needs.

445 Pages . . . $6.00 at all bookstores

THE CRUSADER PRESS, INC.

27-42 THOMSON AVE., LONG ISLAND CITY 1, N. Y.

THE CHANGING WORLD

edited by

Bernard Wall and Manya Harari

A quarterly review devoted to philosophy, sociology, criticism and the arts, and to documentation by experts on current questions.

Subjects discussed are the most pressing ones of the crisis through which we are passing. Contributors are drawn on a widely international basis and include:

LEWIS MUMFORD, GREGORIO MARANON, GABRIEL MARCEL, DAVID JONES, G. BORGESE, W. H. AUDEN, GIUSEPPE UNGARETTI, PIERRE-JEAN JOUVE, WALDEMAR GURIAN, ALBERTO MORAVIA, DANIEL ROPS, MONTGOMERY BELGION, FRED MARNAU, DENNIS HARDING, RAMON GOMEZ DE LA SERNA, NICHOLAS MOORE, NICOLAI SOLLOHUB, T. HESS, G. S. FRASER, etc.

Subscription Form

THE CHANGING WORLD
c/o Countess Illinska,
333 East 57th Street, New York 22, N. Y.

I herewith enclose cheque for the sum of $3; being one year's subscription to The Changing World Review.

Name .....

Address .....

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Next Week

DISJOINTED MAN, by Max Picard, is a most provocative dissection of the breakdown of the inner world of modern man. It cites the jumbling effect on the mind of picture magazines and radio fare and the Nazi criminal as one extreme end product.

INTERMOUNTAIN COUNTRY, by Philip Burnham, deals with the under-developed and spectacular area of our West which lies between the Cascade Mountains and the Continental Divide.

MEDICAL MISSION TO AUSTRIA, by Joseph P. Evans, M.D., tells what an American doctor recently found in the land which used to be the center for advanced medical work.

SAINT CATHERINE AND PEACE, by D. H. Moseley, is inspired by the sixth centenary of the Patroness of Italy, who combined a life of prayer in her home in Siena with most active missions to the spiritual and secular leaders of her time.

CATHOLIC BOOK WEEK—The Editors call attention to leading Catholic books of the current publishing season.

-----12 Issues for $1-----

For New Subscribers

THE COMMONWEAL,
386 Fourth Ave.
New York 16, N. Y.

For the enclosed $1 send me the next 12 issues of
THE COMMONWEAL

Name .....

Street .....

City .....
11/7/47

Not that the author doesn't trace the outlines of Deb's odyssey from "pure and simple" unionism to Socialism and eventually to his heroically charitable interlude in the federal jail at Atlanta. He does. But, frankly, the reader never quite knows whether Debs is speaking for himself or whether Irving Stone is speaking for him. All of which adds up to the hope that someone will soon come forth with a thoroughly documented and definitive biography of a man who, whatever else can be said about him, had a habit of speaking and writing for himself.

Debs was a great man. No question about that—although one has the feeling at times that Stone's admiring portrait is perhaps a little too much on the side of light pastels. But, even allowing for such a possibility, Debs emerges from the book as a sort of secular saint—the essence of kindness, honesty, integrity, and almost heroic self-sacrifice. And if his heart was sometimes bigger than his head—witness, for example, his superficial devotion to fifth-rate rationalists such as Ingersoll, Darrow and others—history will be generous to him as a man who tried heroically to make the world a better place in which to live and who, all things considered, succeeded remarkably well in the effort. History will also forgive him, it is hoped, for his failure to think through the matter of Socialism more thoroughly, although it is suspected that history will be less willing to forgive his biographer for the same offense.

GEORGE G. HIGGINS.

Postscript to Yesterday: America: The Last Fifty Years. Lloyd Morris. Random. $5.00.

THE author's attempt to explain how the American optimism of a half century ago turned to pessimism is presented in a facile, ironical, superior fashion. Seldom has a critic enjoyed with greater relish the sport he makes of prominent figures. With seemingly gentle irony he dwells on the pretensions to social prestige of the Four Hundred and its fringes. He stresses the grotesque aspects of the careers of the nation's leading criminals of the period. And so on through his colorful list of prominent Americans, Mr. Morris's sense of continuous amusement flags chiefly when he has to deal with the writers of the period; his perceptive literary comments are occasionally tinged with real touches of respect. Without a special sense of humor or interest in the period most readers will have difficulty persevering from start to finish without turning to other volumes for a respite, but in occasional, topical doses "Postscript to Yesterday" is bright and entertaining indeed.

CONTRIBUTORS

Francis DOWNING is assistant educational director of the United Auto Workers—CIO.

George N. SHUSTER is President of Hunter College in New York.

James RORTY has just completed a study of the fertilizer situation for the TVA, and has published the results in a booklet entitled "Food at the Grass Roots."

Helen ISWOLSKY is the author of "Light Before Dusk" and "Soul of Russia."

Virgilia PETERSON reviews for the New York *Herald Tribune* weekly book section.

Claire Huchet BISHOP has just completed "France Alive," which is published by Declan X. McMullen.

Rev. George G. HIGGINS teaches sociology at the Catholic University of America.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED